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Castro Claims U. S. Conducts Germ Warfare

Premier Says Bacteria-Filled Balloons Found

State Department Dismisses Claim As Preposterous

HAVANA (UPI) — Prime Minister Fidel Castro charged Monday that "Yankee imperialism" is "testing or attempting to carry out" germ warfare against Communist Cuba.

In an official communique released by the national palace, he claimed balloon-carried bacteriological cultures have been dropped on Cuba.

In Washington, a state department spokesman dismissed Castro's charge in three words: "Absurd and preposterous."

May 29th Date

"The probability has been taken into consideration that imperialism is testing or attempting to carry out the use of a new model of aggression, brutal and inhuman, (against Cuba): the use of bacteriological and virus weapons against our economy and people," the communique said.

The communique said that on May 29 several balloons of different size were seen to descend near Santi Espiritu in Las Villas Province.

As soon as they hit the ground, the note said, the balloons dissolved "dropping a gelatinous substance similar to that which is used in bacteria cultures, which also rapidly dissolved."

Area Alerted

The note added that strong rains prevented gathering of samples which could be given "exhaustive chemical research."

Castro said "although a fact of this nature would be of extraordinary seriousness and of unforeseen consequences, the lack of scruples of Yankee imperialism, its international conduct at the margin of the most elemental norms of law and civilization, its impotence in face

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of the consolidation and advance of our revolution, could carry it to the most monstrous actions against our nation."

The note said the zone has been placed under medical observation "and we must be conscious and alert for this type of danger."

It said the United States was capable of such action as germ warfare "as is evident by their recent action in prohibiting the sale to Cuba of medicines and baby foods."

The U. S. special licensing action was taken when it was learned the Cuban government was attempting to buy large orders of U. S. pharmaceutical products through Canadian buyers.

The official reasoning behind the new licensing requirement was said to be that the orders were considered inordinately large in view of Cuba's receipt of tons of many of the same drugs during the December, 1962 ransom of the captured Bay of Pigs invaders.